



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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DEQ, LDWF partner to fight litter, illegal dumping

SHREVEPORT– The Louisiana Departments of Environmental Quality and Wildlife and Fisheries will soon begin an effort to increase surveillance for litter and illegal dumping throughout Louisiana. Littering law enforcement primarily focuses on individuals while illegal dumping law enforcement pertains to businesses that illegally dispose of wastes.

DEQ Secretary Harold Leggett and the LDWF Secretary Robert Barham announced today that the two agencies will partner together and share resources to address littering and illegal dumping. The announcement was made in conjunction with the 2009 Keep Louisiana Beautiful State Conference in Shreveport.

“This is a partnership that makes good sense,” said DEQ Secretary Harold Leggett. “Both agencies have staff active in the field. By working together, we can increase the area the agencies are able to cover and work together to mitigate illegal activity. Together, we are streamlining state government and working efficiently to what is right for Louisiana.”

Litter costs Louisiana taxpayers more than \$15 million annually and can affect the environment by spoiling the ecosystems that include fish breeding grounds and waterfowl habitat. It can also disrupt the natural flow of water to contribute to flooding problems. LDWF Enforcement Division agents patrol woodlands and public waterways as part of their daily duties. Their law enforcement responsibilities include issuing citations for litter law violations.

DEQ-CID has ramped up its efforts to stop illegal disposal of waste by conducting illegal dumping stings in notorious illegal dumping areas and making more arrests in 2009 than the last five years combined.

This partnership assures citizens of the state that there are more agents in the field looking for possible illegal activity. DEQ and LDWF will participate in regular meetings to discuss enforcing littering and illegal dumping regulations, share tips on possible sites or suspects and have an official directive to work with each other on such illegal activities. In addition, DEQ and LDWF will conduct joint training and field exercises to increase public awareness.

“Whether you’re an outdoors enthusiast trying to enjoy time in the woods or on the water, a visitor from another state driving through our great state or a citizen on the way to work or home, you should not have to see the trash left behind from someone who does not respect the property of others,” said LDWF Secretary Barham. “Our Enforcement Division agents will focus on waterways and areas set aside for public use.”

LDWF currently enforces two classifications of littering violations: intentional littering and gross littering. Intentional littering is defined as improper disposal of waste material in any public place, private property or state waterway. Gross littering is improper disposal of household or office furniture or appliances, automotive parts, trailers, boats, and boating accessories, tools and equipment, building materials, and bags or boxes of household or office garbage or refuse. Penalties for littering or gross littering may include fines, community service in litter abatement programs, the suspension of motor vehicle driver’s licenses and possibly imprisonment. Fines collected under the Louisiana Litter Law are distributed to the law enforcement agency that issued the citation, local government agencies, and the state treasury for credit to the Keep Louisiana Beautiful Fund.

DEQ has a strong deterrent to keep people from illegally dumping. Under the misdemeanor and felony provisions of Louisiana Revised Statute 30:2025, people who illegally dump face the possibility of jail time and criminal penalties of up to \$100,000 for the illegal disposal of a substance that endangers human health and the environment under the felony provision and up to \$25,000 for illegal disposal under the misdemeanor provision.

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